



# SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

December typically brings only minimal changes in labor force and jobs. There are usually trade-offs where job increases in one industry are offset by job decreases in another industry. December 2001 was no exception. In December 2001, the Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA's) seasonally adjusted unemployment rate edged up one-tenth of a percentage point to 5.4 percent from November 2001's revised rate of 5.3 percent.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* dropped from 33,410 in November 2001 to 33,180 in December 2001 for a loss of 230 jobs. The reductions followed normal seasonal patterns, and most job reductions occurred in *Construction* (90) and *Government Education* (230). Summer construction projects that extended into the fall kept some construction workers employed into October and November, but by December most projects have been completed and jobs disappeared. Since schools and colleges closed for holiday breaks in December, jobs declined in that industry. There was little fluctuation in other industries in December.

From December 2000 to December 2001, the Pocatello MSA's unemployment rate jumped seven-tenths of a percentage point. The increase in the unemployment rate from December 2000 was because of major layoffs during the year as the economy dipped into a recession. American Microsystems, Inc. reduced staff because of a slowing economy, particularly in the electronics/technical sector, and Astaris eliminated jobs when they closed their Pocatello manufacturing facility because trade imports and market conditions reduced their profitability.

The change in the number of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* was much less dramatic. *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* declined by 70 over the year, a loss of just two-tenths of a percentage point. Part of the reason that *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* did not show the dramatic difference that the unemployment rate did is because jobs are counted in the county where the work is performed and

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	Dec 2001*	Nov 2001	Dec 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,280	41,210	39,460	0.2	4.6
Unemployment	2,250	2,190	1,860	2.7	21.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.4	5.3	4.7		
Total Employment	39,030	39,020	37,600	0.0	3.8
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	40,540	40,550	40,660	0.0	-0.3
Unemployment	1,690	1,660	1,660	1.8	1.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.2	4.1	4.1		
Total Employment	38,860	38,890	39,000	-0.1	-0.4
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	33,180	33,410	33,250	-0.7	-0.2
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	4,220	4,320	4,530	-2.3	-6.8
Mining & Construction	1,600	1,690	1,590	-5.3	0.6
Manufacturing	2,620	2,630	2,940	-0.4	-10.9
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	28,960	29,090	28,720	-0.4	0.8
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	1,730	1,750	1,760	-1.1	-1.7
Wholesale Trade	1,450	1,420	1,520	2.1	-4.6
Retail Trade	6,950	6,890	7,420	-0.9	-6.3
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,790	1,790	1,620	0.0	10.5
Services	8,190	8,150	7,910	0.5	3.5
Government Administration	3,440	3,450	3,400	-0.3	1.2
Government Education	5,410	5,640	5,090	-4.1	6.3

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

unemployment is counted in the county where the worker resides. The Pocatello MSA, for which labor force and jobs are reported for this area, contains only Bannock County. Astaris is located in Power County, but most of the workers there live in Bannock County. Therefore the unemployment rate was affected in Bannock County, but the number of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* was affected in Power County and not reflected in the Pocatello MSA statistics. Jobs increased in *Services* (280), *Finance, Insurance & Real Estate* (170), and *Government Education* (320). Jobs appear to have increased significantly in *Services*, but occurred because of a redistribution of where jobs in *Membership Organizations* were reported and do not reflect the actual number of new jobs over the year. Jobs increased in *Government Education*, primarily *State Government Education*, because of student employment at Idaho State University, which tends to fluctuate from month-to-month. Added jobs in *Finance, Insurance & Real Estate* occurred mainly because of a re-organization at Farmers Insurance last summer. Job reductions in the area, the national recession, and drought took their toll on the retail sector. *Retail Trade* jobs were down by 470 in December 2001 from December 2000. The gradual loss of retail jobs, coupled with fewer temporary jobs for the holidays, contributed to the reduction. Another standout was the decline of 320 *Manufacturing* jobs from December 2000. The obvious cause was the American Microsystems reduction but small reductions also occurred in every other manufacturing industry.

## AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

*Please note: Information contained in Economic Developments is obtained from area newspapers, local Job Service offices, trade publications, local area Chambers of Commerce publications, and other sources.*

### Bannock County

- An \$8 million dollar redevelopment project began in December to turn the old Simplot building at 4122 Yellowstone Avenue in Pocatello into a regional shopping center. The center, Cobblestone Creek, will house T.J. Maxx and Pier 1 Imports and have space for two more retailers in the main building. Plans include the addition of a 4,500-square-foot pad site for future development. T.J. Maxx is a national department store chain and Pier 1 Imports is a national gifts and home furnishings chain. Completion of the renovation is expected this spring.
- Best Auto Parts has begun site excavation for their new store on the Fred Meyer Campus in Pocatello.
- Candle Works in Old Town Pocatello moved into the former Chocolate Soup location at 150 South Main. The move allowed the business to expand from custom-made candles to a gift shop featuring local craft maker's wares and a coffee bar.
- The Union Pacific Railroad has announced plans to close the Pocatello hump yard and eliminate 30 jobs. The announcement was made in January 2001, and closure of the hump is expected sometime this spring. The railroad also will dismantle tracks in its Pocatello operation. Railroad officials stated that the closure is necessary for the company to remain competitive nationwide.
- Local retailers reported a better-than-expected holiday shopping season. In Pocatello, national chains Walmart, K-Mart, and Fred Meyer reported bustling holiday shopping activities. Small, locally owned businesses also reported better sales this year than last year.

### Bingham County

- Bingham Community Rural Health Clinic opened at Bingham Memorial Hospital in Blackfoot. The clinic is designed to care for patients who do not have a primary care physician. A nurse practitioner and two local physicians have been hired to provide health care at the clinic.
- Cobia Photography opened in the Clark Plaza on Parkway Drive in Blackfoot. The business specializes in school, family, and special events photography.
- Construction is underway on the new C-A-L Ranch Store on Meridian in Blackfoot. Completion and opening of the store is expected in May 2002.
- The Blackfoot Urban Renewal Agency has obtained funds for a \$1.2 million downtown revitalization project. The project will include replacement of water, sewer, and storm sewer lines; curbs, gutters and side-

walks; installation of decorative lighting; and the leveling and repaving of some streets. The project is expected to begin by the end of March and be completed by the end of July.

- Spudnik Equipment Company of Blackfoot has partnered with Grimme Agricultural Equipment of Germany. The partnership establishes a business that will design, manufacture, distribute and service potato equipment worldwide.
- Shelley Cabinet Company of Shelley will expand its cabinet manufacturing business and add approximately 18 employees. Shelley Cabinet Co. has been in business for nearly 50 years.
- The Typhoon Restaurant in Blackfoot closed in January. The space previously occupied by the restaurant will be used in an expansion of the Oakridge Deli. The owners have retained the Typhoon franchise and may re-open at a different location in the future.

### Franklin County

- The new Larsen-Sant Library opened in Preston in February 2002. A human chain was formed to move books from the old Carnegie Library to the new library. More than 2,000 people helped to move 8,000 books into the new facility.

### Oneida County

- Oneida County Commissioners hosted an open house to allow residents to see the new \$390,000 county shop. The building is 9,600-square feet and has four separate working bays.
- Oneida County Search and Rescue has announced plans to build a new Search and Rescue building. The group has received federal grants and loans to purchase materials; labor will be provided by Search and Rescue members. The group also is working on obtaining waterways funding to add another bay for boat storage and a jet ski for patrolling reservoirs.

### Power County

- Completion of the new American Falls High School is ahead of schedule and will be ready for students to begin the fall 2002 school year. The 143,000-square-foot building is one level and complies with Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility regulations. The school includes a 1,477-seat gym, an 876-seat auditorium and a standard sized stage with an orchestra pit. The school can accommodate 650 students with expansion to 876 students.

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